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NASA Policy Directive

NPD 3410.2FEffective Date: April 09, 2009
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Request Notification of Change

(NASA Only)

Subject: Employee and Organizational Development

Responsible Office: Office of Human Capital Management

1. POLICY

To support the full utilization of the NASA workforce in achieving NASA's strategic outcomes and managing its human capital, it is NASA's policy to make training and developmental opportunities widely available to employees to enhance individual capabilities and competencies; build and retain a skilled and effective workforce; improve organizational performance; and maintain scientific, professional, technical, and management proficiency. More specifically, it is NASA's policy to:

- a. Use on-the-job training through selected work experiences as the primary method of developing the job-related knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies of employees.
- b. Support systematic plans to broaden employees' knowledge and skills through mentoring and coaching and planned, work-related developmental assignments including on-the-job training, rotational assignments, and non-NASA work experiences.
- c. Use formal training and educational experiences to complement work experiences and to achieve better organizational and individual performance.
- d. Provide new supervisors with at least 40 hours of supervisory and management training within six months of the assignment, 80 hours within the first two years, advanced training for all supervisors and managers as needed, and continual development and training for Senior Executives. Examples of topics covered in the supervisory and management training may include NASA Strategy and Vision, Managing Performance, Management Practices and Multirater Assessment Feedback, Equal Opportunity and Diversity, Strategic Alliances, and Managing Change.
- e. Support employee training, retraining, mentoring and coaching, and organizational development activities leading to better ways of delivering services, improving work performance, and increasing the value of employee contributions to current and future

Agency missions.

f. Conduct a biannual review of Center training and development plans to ensure that the Agency is efficiently developing and utilizing training and associated budgets. The biannual review will strengthen the accountability of the Training and Leadership Development program throughout NASA.

g. Use foreign-owned training organizations for NASA employees only when it is fully justified by a requirement that cannot be met by domestically owned organizations or when there is a distinct advantage to the Agency.

h. Permit participation in vendor promotional training to the extent permitted by referenced ethics and travel regulations.

i. Permit NASA contractor personnel to attend authorized and scheduled NASA training, provided that space is available and such attendance does not deny civil service employees the training. The training must be necessary for Government purposes. The basis for training of contractors derives from the authority to administer contracts. Contractors may, therefore, only be trained in skills that they are not required to bring to the job and, without directly reimbursing the Agency, if there is a benefit to the Agency or a governmental interest for such attendance.

j. Require employees selected for training in excess of 80 hours to complete a continued service agreement before assignment to either Government or non-Government training and development programs. The employee shall agree to continue in the service of the Federal Government after the end of the training period for a period equal to at least three times the length of the training/development. For training less than 80 hours, a continued service agreement is not required.

(1) Repayment of the direct costs of the training, including travel and per diem expenses, is required if the employee voluntarily separates from NASA prior to completion of the agreed-upon time period as outlined in the continued service agreement. Employees may also be responsible for reimbursing NASA for any training costs for courses that are not successfully completed. The repayment of training costs consists of the necessary expenses of the training, including travel and per diem costs, but not allocable salary or other compensation. Per section 1.n., repayment may be required if the employee does not attend or complete a course satisfactorily. Furthermore, repayment may be required of contracting organizations should their employees fail to attend or complete a course satisfactorily.

(2) In its discretion, NASA may waive its right to recovery, if repayment would be against equity and good conscience or is in the public interest, and may release the employee from all or part of the continued service agreement. The employee may request a reconsideration of the recovery amount or appeal for a waiver of the Agency's right to recover. In the public interest, NASA may waive an employee's obligation under a continued service agreement if the employee leaves NASA for employment in another agency in a branch of the Federal Government. Waiver levels are determined by the dollar value of the waiver sought, as set out in section 5.c. herein.

k. Permit the use of appropriated or other available funds to select and assign an employee to academic training. Also, to pay or reimburse the costs of academic degree training if the training is part of an Agency employee development program that is linked to accomplishing the strategic goals of the Agency and contributes significantly to meeting an identified Agency training need or resolves a staffing problem; and is

provided by a college or university that is accredited by a nationally recognized body.

(1) Training shall not be used for the sole purpose of providing an employee an opportunity to obtain an academic degree or qualify for appointment to a particular position for which the academic degree is a basic requirement. Merit selection procedures, as outlined in 5 CFR § 335- 103(b)(3) and 5 CFR part 300, subpart A, must be used to select employees for an authorized academic degree program when completion of the program will result in promotion to another position. This authority may not be used to qualify for a noncareer Senior Executive appointment or for an appointment excepted from the competitive service because of the confidential policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character of the position.

l. Permit the use of appropriated funds or funds otherwise available to pay for expenses for employees to obtain professional credentials, including expenses for professional accreditation, State-imposed and professional licenses, professional certification, and examinations to obtain such credentials. This authority may not be exercised on behalf of any employee occupying or seeking to qualify for appointment to any position that is excepted from the competitive service because of the confidential, policy-determining, policy-making, or policy-advocating character of the position, e.g., Schedule C appointments.

(1) Criteria for payment of expenses to obtain professional credentials are to be applied consistent with merit system principles, per 5 U.S.C. § 2301, to achieve better organizational and individual performance. Examples that may warrant payment of professional licenses and credentials may include circumstances such as payment of a professional license or credential in a hard-to-fill strategic workforce competency or as a retention tool for a mission critical competency. All criteria shall be reviewed at regular intervals, as established. Consistent with the foregoing, Center Directors, or a designee, may use appropriated funds to pay expenses to obtain professional credentials for employees and contract employees at or assigned to their respective Centers.

m. Require that prior to the implementation of Federally mandated and agency-required training, course owners coordinate with the Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM) to evaluate the requirement. Individuals with Agency-level responsibility may require training in compliance with a Federal mandate, law, regulation, Presidential Directive, etc. Before establishing any requirement, OHCM will ensure that the training meets the definitions provided by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and is coordinated with the appropriate Mission Directorates and Mission Support Offices. An overview of the NASA Standard Operating Procedure on Federally Mandated Training is provided in Appendix A herein.

n. Establish an Agency standard of what constitutes a passing grade for training courses taken from a college or university. Accordingly, for Agency purposes, a grade of "C" constitutes acceptable academic standing for undergraduate courses, and a grade of "C" will be considered "passing" for undergraduate courses. Likewise, a grade of "B" constitutes acceptable academic standing for graduate-level courses, and a grade of "B" will be considered "passing" for graduate courses. Employees will be expected to repay course costs if they do not obtain a passing grade or do not complete the course, per section 1.j. herein.

(1) Academic course records will be maintained by the NASA Shared Services Center (NSSC), which will record all grades for courses. This will include courses that are completed but wherein the employee did not receive an acceptable grade, as well as

courses wherein the employee has not finished or has withdrawn. Employees are responsible for providing a copy of their academic grade transcript to the NSSC within twenty (20) business days of course completion.

o. Establish an attendance policy to ensure that participants who attend internal training obtain the maximum learning possible. Participants are expected to attend all sessions in order to receive a course certificate and documentation in their System for Administration, Training and Educational Resources for NASA (SATERN) learning history.

(1) If exceptional circumstances preclude the full attendance for the duration of the course, the participant may request an attendance waiver from the course manager. Such excusals may be granted for emergencies such as a critical work event, family emergency, or similar unavoidable and unforeseen circumstances requiring the individual's attendance or attention. Learning is a priority at NASA, and the Agency's expectation is that supervisors and managers who approve training for their employees support their full participation in the course(s).

2. APPLICABILITY

This NPD applies to NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers, including Component Facilities, except the Office of the Inspector General which may implement the policy through its own personnel authority.

3. AUTHORITY

- a. 42 U.S.C. § 2473, National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended.
- b. 5 U.S.C. § 4101, et seq., Government Employees Training Act.
- c. 5 U.S.C. § 5757, Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials.
- d. 5 U.S.C. § 4107, Academic Degree Training.
- e. 5 U.S.C. §§ 3391-3397, Appointment, Reassignment, Transfer, and Development in the Senior Executive Service.

4. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS

- a. 5 U.S.C. § 2301 et seq., Merit System Principles.
- b. Executive Order 11348, Providing for the Further Training of Government Employees, dated April 20, 1967.
- c. 5 CFR part 410, Training.
- d. 5 CFR part 2635, Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch.
- e. 5 CFR part 412, Executive, Management, and Supervisory Development.
- f. 41 CFR Chapter 304, Payment from a Non-Federal Source for Travel Expenses.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

- a. The Administrator establishes Agency policy for employee and organizational development training programs, as set forth herein. The Administrator retains the authority for managing the Senior Executive Service (SES), including their developmental assignments exceeding 120 days, details, and Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) assignments. Authority is otherwise decentralized and delegated to operating organizational levels intending that decisions are made by officials having the best knowledge of competencies required to accomplish functions of the Agency.
- b. The Associate Administrator for Institutions and Management, the NASA Center Directors, and the Director of Headquarters Operations shall be responsible for providing leadership, direction, and resources to ensure that required employee and organizational development activities support both the near- and long-term needs of the Agency.
- c. The Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management shall be responsible and accountable for providing overall executive leadership and strategic policy direction for the Agency's technical, functional, and leadership training, as well as organizational development programs. The Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management also serves as the Chair of the Training and Development Advisory Council. Duties of the Chair may be delegated. The Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management retains the authority to grant a waiver of the Agency's right to recover repayment or consider the recovery amount from an employee who fails to fulfill the terms of the continued service agreement for training in excess of \$25,000 for corporate-sponsored and -funded courses (such as NASA Fellowships and Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program).
- d. The Center Directors shall redelegate further, to a lower organizational level, waiver of repayment costs that are less than \$10,000. Costs equal to or in excess of \$10,000 may not be redelegated more than one organizational level below the Center Director. The Center Directors shall establish procedures for recovery of training costs for courses that are not successfully completed by their employees. Repayment of training costs consists of the necessary expenses of the training, including travel and per diem costs, but not allocable salary. The Center Directors shall establish procedures for considering requests for waivers of continued service agreements for their Center employees, including procedures to enable the employee to request a waiver of all or a portion of the recovery amount. The Center Directors shall consider waiving recovery of the training expenses in circumstances where recovery of repayment would be against equity and good conscience or in the public interest, such as movement to another Government agency; skills/competencies possessed by the employee are readily available in the organization, or similar reasons.
- e. The Center Directors shall be responsible for managing their respective Center's resources for training in accordance with financial accounting requirements. They are accountable for adhering to the policies and guidelines set forth by the Office of Human Capital Management for ensuring that training and developmental activities are appropriately funded, properly supported, and conducted. The Center Directors shall be expected to budget for and use training resources to improve organizational and individual performance, including allowing the use of funds to pay for an academic degree, credentials, and licenses, where appropriate.
- f. The Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, Office of Human Capital Management, NASA Headquarters, shall be responsible for oversight of NASA's training, leadership, and organizational development programs. The Director approves and allocates Agency-wide training funds, manages corporate learning activities,

reviews and approves foreign training requests, and provides Agency program oversight, including the approval of biannual Center training and development plans. The Director also serves as the Executive Secretary for the Training and Development Advisory Council (TDAC), and Executive Secretary of the NASA Executive Resources Board, which oversees and coordinates the SES system for executive development.

g. The Agency Training Officer, Workforce Management and Development Division, shall be responsible for the functional management of NASA's training programs, which includes the design, development, and conduct of the Agency's training and leadership programs. The Agency Training Officer develops and administers Agency training and development policy, administers annual Agency training and leadership development budget, reviews Center's biannual training and development plans and Agency-level training plans, makes recommendations to the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, and serves on the TDAC in an ex officio capacity.

h. The TDAC is composed of senior leadership representing Mission Directorates and Mission Support Offices as well as the Centers. The TDAC will be convened and tasked, as appropriate, by the Chair. The TDAC provides oversight and guidance related to establishing and supporting a robust and integrated Agency-wide training and development system that creates and sustains technical, administrative, and leadership talent within the organization. Its role, when tasked by the Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management, is to:

- (1) Review and advise on Agency-wide training and development needs, goals, objectives, and strategies to support the NASA mission.
- (2) Advise Agency and Human Capital senior leadership on strategic training and development, including leadership education, and training and development needs; and advocate for support, funding, and other resources required to develop and fully implement a training and development program.
- (3) Ensure a consistent, integrated approach to the development, selection, and utilization of leaders across the Agency.
- (4) Serve as the selection panel for Agency-sponsored training and development programs.
- (5) Serve as the recommendation panel to the Executive Resources Board (ERB) for the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SESCDP).
- (6) Guide the evolution of a culture that values the development of leaders.

h. The NASA Center Human Capital Directors and/or Human Resources and Organizational Development (Training) Officers shall be responsible for developing and implementing employee and organizational development programs at the operating organizational levels. They shall be responsible to Center Directors for providing technical advice and human resource development functional support to their Center managers and for providing training plans, as required, to the Office of Human Capital Management for purposes of Agency program planning and evaluation. They may authorize a full- or part-time planned academic degree training program to address identified systemic Agency needs linked to specific Agency strategic goals.

i. The Center Training Officers shall be required to obtain a signed continued service agreement prior to their employees' participation in both Center and Agency-wide training or developmental programs in excess of 80 hours. Requests for waivers shall be

handled as set forth by this NPD and implementing directives.

j. NASA employees selected for training in excess of 80 hours must agree in writing with NASA, before assignment to training, to continue in the service of NASA for a period at least equal to three times the length of the training period. If the employee leaves NASA before the agreed-upon amount of service, the employee may be required to proportionally repay NASA for time not served. As stated in section 1.j. herein, the Agency may waive an employee's obligation under the continued service agreement if the employee leaves NASA for the service of another agency in any branch of the Federal Government.

k. All managers and supervisors jointly share with their subordinates the responsibility and accountability for their development and training. Managers and supervisors determine the job-related knowledge, skills, and competencies that employees need to effectively accomplish the organization's work. They are also jointly responsible with their subordinates for assessing current capabilities, determining near- and long-term development and training to enhance employee performance, and preparing Individual Development Plans (IDP) that support job requirements to include timely completion of supervisory and management training, career goals, and Agency needs.

l. Mission Support Organizations and Disciplines shall be responsible for providing direction for satisfying legislative, regulatory, and or administratively mandated training associated with their functional responsibility. They develop requirements for the resources to respond to these mandates and to provide technical guidance for the design, development, and delivery of training activities in support of their functional requirements.

m. The Assistant Administrator for External Relations shall be responsible for reviewing all requests for foreign training as tasked by OHCM, including developmental work assignments, confirming the eligibility of any proposed training facility with the Department of State, and determining whether the training is compatible with current foreign policy objectives.

6. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

Pursuant to the Government Employees Training Act, 5 U.S.C. § 4101 et seq., the Administrator hereby delegates, to the specified officials mentioned above, the authority to fulfill the duties set forth in section 5. Responsibility.

7. MEASUREMENTS/VERIFICATION

The Training and Development Division will monitor NASA-wide metrics on training and development activities that contribute to the achievement of Agency human capital goals, as described in NASA's Strategic Plan. All Center training offices and the Headquarters training office should regularly monitor evaluation data from training courses. Further, training offices are encouraged to use a wide range of training and development measures, including the number of supervisors completing their required training within the targeted timeframe, the number of training instances per NASA employee, the number and types of training offered, the percentage of employees receiving training, the number of employees meeting training goals identified in their respective IDPs, and, wherever possible, the linkages between training and productivity improvement/cost savings.

8. CANCELLATION

NPD 3410.2E dated August 19, 2003.

/s/Christopher J. Scolese
Acting Administrator

ATTACHMENT A: (TEXT)

Federally Mandated and Agency Required Training

As a continuous learning Agency, NASA must ensure the optimal alignment of training to meet the objectives of the Agency's mission. Given the size of NASA's workforce, any training requirement poses a significant organizational cost. A systematic approach to the establishment of training requirements requires a consistent approval, implementation, and communication process. In so doing, this ensures that the investment of employee time and resources to training is maximized.

OHCM has developed a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on Federally Mandated Training to provide clarity and structure to the process of evaluating, developing, and communicating federally mandated training. This guidance is designed to ensure that mandatory training is established in accordance with appropriate authority, including frequency, duration, and content.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Training Policy Handbook defines Federally mandated training as "Mandatory training for all employees Governmentwide. This includes training mandated by federal statute or regulation; such as in the areas of computer security awareness (Title 5 CFR §930.301-305), ethics (Title 5 CFR §2638.703 and 704), or executives, managerial, and supervisory, (Title 5 CFR Part 412)."

Agency-required training is defined as Agency-specific training required by the Agency and provided to employees in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the Agency.

When a potential training requirement has been identified, OHCM will ensure that the training requirement has been properly evaluated in accordance with the SOP. The evaluation process will ensure that communications define: the training objectives, the target audience (civil service employees and/or contractors), deadlines, reporting requirements, instructions for accessing the training, and all other pertinent information.

(URL for Graphic)

None.

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